

CHARIVARIA.

A FEATURE of the recent manœuvres which has given widespread satisfaction is the demonstration that a rapid concentration of troops by rail is possible without dislocation of the ordinary civil traffic. One of the chief objections to hostilities in this country disappears now that it has been shown that our golfers would be able to get to their courses without interference.

The GERMAN EMPRESS, while visiting a village school in Alsace, promised to grant a little girl to whom she spoke whatever she wished. The girl replied that she would like French to be taught in the school. Her request has now been granted, and it is rumoured that her father has reproved her severely because it did not occur to her to ask that Alsace should be given back to France.

The Paris Municipal Council is creating a "Seaside" for the poor children of Paris in the woods of Vincennes on a scale hitherto unattempted. To complete the illusion, a benevolent old gentleman, it is rumoured, is about to present the park with a real sand-hopper.

Lecturing at the London Salon of Photography, Mr. ALEXANDER KEIGHLEY mentioned that he knew of an Italian mediæval castle which had been sold to an Englishman for £39. Castles in Spain may be had for even less than this.

A wasp's nest with eleven tiers has been found at Shamley Green, Surrey. The skyscraper craze would appear to be spreading.

Mannish women we all know, and now, it is stated, a cat that barks like a dog has just arrived in Boston from Calcutta.

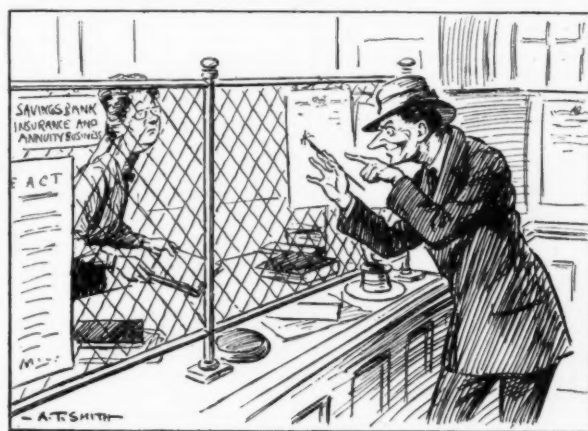
Roller-skating in the street, we read, has been banned by the Camberwell and Kensington Borough Councils. As a matter of fact, we believe that gutter-snipes with the slightest pretension to being in the mode, gave it up some time ago.

One would have thought that any effort to brighten up our parks and to provide free amusements there would have been encouraged by those in

authority. Last week, however, the Willesden magistrates imposed a fine of half-a-crown on a Mrs. SMITH who chased her husband round a public park with a hatpin.

In opening his Institute Mr. LLOYD GEORGE paid a tribute to the sense of chivalry and good feeling that animates British political life. When the Suffragettes appeared the CHANCELLOR's audience made it quite clear that he was not addressing a political meeting.

The Milan Alpine Club has organised a huge excursion to the Alps. The party, which consists of over one thousand persons, includes 50 journalists, 40 doctors, and a dentist. To judge by the last item a determined attack is to be made on the Dent du Midi.



"SURELY WE HAVE HERE A YOUNG PEN OF 1890? IT HAS THE SIDE-WHISKERS!"

"EMPTY VILLAGES. WHY MEN ARE DRIVEN TO THE TOWNS."

Thus a daily paper. We have not read the article, but can the reason be that the men are too lazy to walk?

One of the rules of the Iron Rail Club for Girls in New York is, *The Express* tells us, that, whenever the members see a man, they shall droop their eyes and run away. We hesitate to believe the rumour that some of the men are proving so churlish as to refuse to give chase.

"At the Battersea Court the case was heard of two lodgers, formerly on the list as joint lodgers, one of whom had become the sole occupier during the qualifying period. Objection was taken to the man on the ground that he had described himself as 'joint' when he should have put 'sole.'"—*Standard*.

He really ought to know his proper place on the menu.

"FOUR-PAWS."

FOUR-PAWS, the kitten from the farm,
Is come to live with Betsey-Jane,
Leaving the stack-yard for the warm
Flower-compacted cottage in the lane,
To wash his idle face and play
Among chintz cushions all the day.

Under the shadow of her hair
He lies, who loves him nor desists
To praise his whiskers and compare
The tabby bracelets on his wrists,—
Omelet at lunch and milk at tea
Suit Betsey-Jane, and so fares he.

Happy beneath her golden hand
He purrs contentedly, nor hears
His Mother mourning through the land,
The old grey cat with tattered ears
And humble tail and heavy paw
Who brought him up among the straw.

Never by day she ventures
nigh,
But when the dusk grows
dim and deep
And moths flit out of the
strange sky
And Betsey has been long
asleep—
Out of the dark she comes
and brings
Her dark maternal offer-
ings;—
Some field-mouse or a
throstle caught
Near netted fruit or in
the corn,
Or rat, for this her darling
sought
In the old barn where he
was born;
And all lest on his dainty
bed

Four-paws were faint or under-fed.

Only between the twilight hours
Under the window-panes she walks
Shrewdly among the scented flowers
Nor snaps the soft nasturtium stalks,
Uttering still her plaintive cries
And Four-paws, from the house, replies,
Leaps from his cushion to the floor,
Down the brick passage scantily lit,
Waits wailing at the outer door
Till one arise and open it—
Then from the swinging lantern's light
Runs to his Mother in the night.

Literary Note.

A new book is announced, entitled *Poems to Pavlova*. That it will be allowed—in this imitative age—to be without a companion is inconceivable, and we confidently anticipate the arrival of *Kyrielles to Kyasht*, *Sonnets to Sinden*, *Monologues to Maud Allan*, *Antistrophes to Adeline*, and *Kwatrains to Karsavina*.

THE LETTER.

"FRANCESCA," I said, "I have had a letter."

"What?" said Francesca. "A letter with a pretty red penny stamp on it, and the postmark quite illegible, so that you couldn't guess from whom it came? Well, you *are* in luck."

"I did not study the postmark," I said wearily. "Postmarks do not interest me. I do not collect postmarks. But, if you like, I will consult this one and find out all about it."

"Was it from your Aunt Matilda?" said Francesca.

"No, Francesca, it was not. At least I think not. Aunt Matilda does not deal in postmarks. She——"

"Yes, I know. Aunt Matilda deals in advice, and I wish she wouldn't. What does she say this time?"

"Francesca," I said, "you are unjust. Aunt Matilda says nothing this time. She offers no advice of any kind."

"I'll bet she does. Hand me the letter."

"You will lose your bet, Francesca. Aunt Matilda has written many letters, but not this one."

"Then why," said Francesca, "did you say she had?"

"My statement was that she had not sent the postmark. If you inferred from it that she had written the letter I am now prepared to withdraw the inference and apologise. Aunt Matilda——"

"Oh, bother your Aunt Matilda!"

"Francesca, I refuse to do so. Her name alone should protect her from such ribaldry."

"What's in her name?" said Francesca.

I hid my head in my hands and groaned. Francesca fumbled for her handkerchief and, failing to find it, fanned me with mine.

"There," she said, "now you're better. But about Aunt Matilda's name?"

"It has come," I moaned. "The little rift within the what's-his-name that by-and-by will make the music something or other—— Help me, Francesca."

"Lute—mute," said Francesca.

"Thank you. The words were on the tip of my tongue. It has come," I continued—"the crisis that comes in the lives of all married people when one or the other discovers that the other or—er—the one falls short of what the one or—er—er—the other supposed her or—er—him to be. I trust I make myself clear."

"Perfectly," said Francesca. "A child could understand you. But how did you know? I never told you. I did not wish to distress you. I could still have gone on wearing a mask and smiling bravely in the sight of——"

"But the mask, you know," I interjected. "They would not have seen your brave smiles." She did not heed me.

"I could still," she went on, "have smiled in the sight of the world, and nobody would have known that my heart was broken because you could not remember a simple quotation. But now concealment is useless." She paused and dabbed her eyes with my handkerchief.

"Pardon me, Francesca," I said, "the boot is on the other leg. The crisis reached me first. I am the discoverer, and all the smiling has got to be done by me. Francesca, you do not know your English history."

"History?" she said.

"Yes, history. Can you breathe the name Matilda and not remember that she was the only daughter of HENRY I., and the only mother of HENRY II.? Can you think of her and not be reminded irresistibly of STEPHEN, with whom she had a civil war? Alas, that the twelfth century should be so soon forgotten! Francesca, I am ashamed of you."

"But how was I to know that your Aunt Matilda was that one? You never told me, and I never heard her

mention STEPHEN. Poor dear, how she must have missed the red carpet and the National Anthem. But then you are a prince, and I," she continued, flushing proudly—"I have married above me. Surely, Sir, you, in whose veins runs the blood of all the Matildas, will not taunt me with my lowly birth."

"I am no taunter," I said. "Sometimes I wish I were. Let us allude no more to this painful subject; let us dismiss our Aunt Matilda from our minds. Francesca, I have had a letter."

"You've said that before."

"No matter, it is still true; though you *have* drawn my Aunt Mat—— I mean an aged female relative across the scent. Things are what they are, you know, Francesca."

"Nonsense. Think of cooks and consols and the weather and the GERMAN EMPEROR. They're always something different."

"I'm not talking," I said, "of cooks and consols or even of the weather and the GERMAN EMPEROR. I am talking of having had a letter."

"But you've got it still, haven't you? Who wrote it?"

"I will not disguise from you, Francesca, that it was written by a man."

"Oh, thank heaven for that! Thank heaven for that!" She broke off and sobbed convulsively.

"Yes," I said, "his name is Fleming—Thomas Fleming. He is certainly a man."

"If it's from Tom Fleming," said Francesca, "you needn't tell me any more about it. He doesn't interest me."

"Francesca, you wrong him. No more profoundly interesting man exists. His speeches at Agricultural Societies' meetings are positively thrilling, and his dinners are a dream."

"Well, I can't stand here any more listening to your dreams. I've got some real letters to write," and she flung out of the room.

"Francesca," I shouted after her, "he wants me to dine with him on Tuesday—in London, you know; and he offers me a bed. I'm going to say Yes. You'd like me to, wouldn't you?"

There was no answer. However, she can't say I didn't tell her all about it. R. C. L.

VANDALS ON DARTMOOR.

GREATLY the high gods wrought this granite tor,
Bold, black, bluff-fronted, bending shaggy brows
On dappled hills where bees in heather drowse.
They set it there to stand for evermore,
With dimness of pale purple set before,
Steeped in the pomp of silence—not to house
Beef-bloated tourists in debased carouse
Upon its stony knees, its thymy floor.

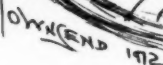
They come by waggonette, a vandal brood;
They sprawl at leisure—"a great herd of swine
Feeding"; and having fed they strew around
Paper, smashed glass, and cardboard on the ground,
Leaving, where none but gods might meetly dine,
Foul wrappings and the relics of their food.

Cruel only to be Kind.

"Mr. Lloyd George, commenting on the result of the Midlothian election, stated that the result proved that the campaign against the Insurance Act is loving force."—*Accrington Observer*.

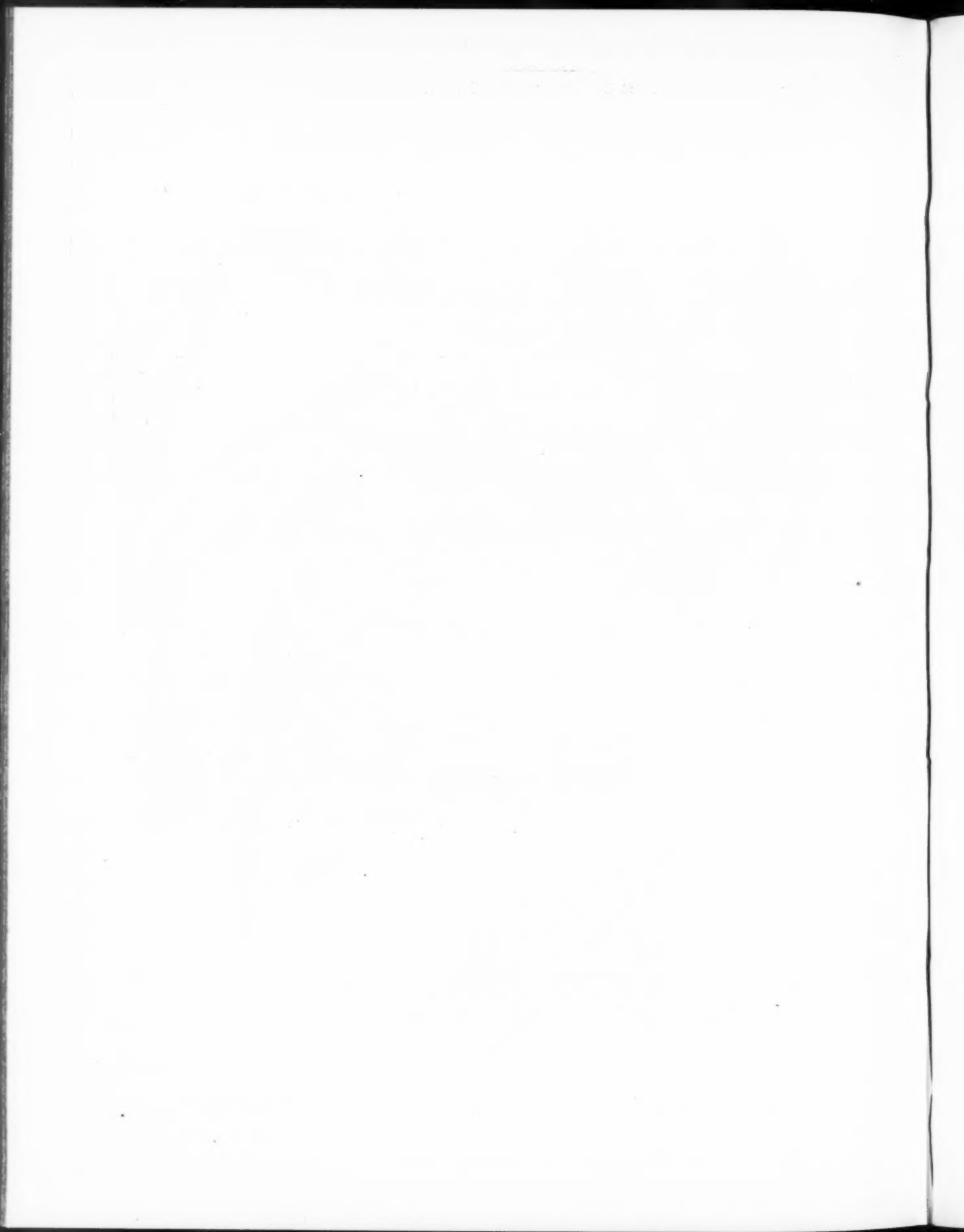
"Much interest was taken in the progress of the underwriting of the new Chinese lion."—*Financial News*.

We are entirely against tattooing for animals.



THE GREAT TRAM v. MOTOR-BUS QUESTION.

THE MOTOR-BUS (*triumphantly*). "THERE YOU ARE, LOOK AT ME! I DON'T HAVE TO RUN IN A SILLY OLD GROOVE. I CAN GO WHERE I LIKE."



shearing season is in full blast, the whole of the Continent is inches deep in wool; and the amount of fleecing that goes on is unbelievable. But there is no malice in it; it is just shear fun. In addition to sheep, there are vast herds of cattle, which are always tended by gentlemen with red shirts, top boots and forty-foot stockwhips. When things are slack in the cattle business, these gentlemen accept situations on the Music Hall stage and are very popular.

Formerly gold grew practically wild in Australia, but, owing to the persistent efforts of the old-time miners and the enterprise of various company-promoters, the industry is now a very tame one. However, the gold served its turn in drawing the attention of the world to Australia, and was a magnificent advertisement. Also, by the time the craze was over, the whole surface of the Continent had been so thoroughly dug up that it was in splendid condition for crops.

Australia is very exclusive as regards many of its attributes, and possesses an entirely original animal kingdom. One particularly exclusive and original type is known as the ornithorhynchus, and it would have been sufficient to make Australia famous even if gold had never been discovered there. It has the feet and bill of a duck and the body and tail of an otter, and it lays eggs and barks like a dog. Also we are inclined to think that it lives entirely on lobster mayonnaise, though naturalists are strangely silent on this point. In addition there are kangaroos and wallabies, and a very ferocious brand of wild dog known as the dingo, which must not be confused with the South African donga.

The favourite pastimes in Australia are cricket, racing and bushranging. The last-named is the only one which calls for any comment, though it is not nearly so popular as it used to be. The *modus operandi* was refreshingly simple, the properties consisting entirely of a man with a mask, a horse, a good revolver and a coach full of gold. The man with the revolver used to shoot the man driving the coach, and then take possession of the gold. It is generally considered that the American Trusts were much impressed with the fascinations of bushranging.

There are many beautiful towns in Australia, and each of them is the most modern and progressive in the world.

Australia has its fair share of plagues, the principal being drought, rabbits,

and the Labour Party. The droughts last only for a few years, as a rule, but the rabbits and Labour Party last for ever. When the country is lying helpless in the dread grip of the drought, all the rivers dry up and the crops shrivel and the sheep die by millions. But after two days' rain everything is prosperous again, and the rich squatters come into town and celebrate in a fitting manner. Australian farmers are called squatters, by the way, because they prefer riding to walking.

Rabbits are a dreadful nuisance. Many years ago, some careless person introduced a couple, and there are now about 786,245,000,000,000, in round figures. They are caught by thousands and frozen into solid masses for export to Europe; but even this awful fate doesn't seem to discourage them.

Australia is principally famous for Sydney Harbour, gum trees, frozen

Two instruments, carefully selected, are as many as an ordinary cow will listen to at once, and both instruments must be pitched in a key not too high or harsh. Harmoniums are ideal, and suit the slow-moving brains of cows admirably."

We are glad to learn that, as a part of the great land campaign initiated under the auspices of the CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER, a scheme for providing for the musical needs, not only of cattle, but horses and poultry, has been worked out by a special sub-committee, including Sir HENRY WOOD, the Earl of TANKERVILLE, KUBELIK, Mr. ARTHUR PONSOMBY, Mr. ALGERNON ASHTON, and Mr. HARRY LAUDER.

One of the most interesting features of the campaign is the effort that is being made to enlist the co-operation of distinguished composers. Several of these have already promised their assistance. Thus Mr. JOSEF HOLBROOKE is actually engaged on an Agricultural Symphonic Tone-Poem entitled, "Three Quavers and a Cow," in which the "Ranz des Vaches" forms the "motto" theme of the entire work. Professor GRANVILLE BANTOCK has welcomed the suggestion with enthusiasm, and is meditating a great Choral Symphony in four movements, of which the subjects will be Ensilage, Intensive Culture, Small Holdings, and Land Taxes. The scenario has been prepared by Mr. OUTHWAITE, but the words will be written in Persian by



THE MULTI-PARLIAMENT AGE. STATE OPENING DAY.

mutton, and *The Bulletin*. It is also very useful in emergencies because it is such a long way from England; and its people are the most open-hearted and hospitable in the world. You ask them.

PHILHARMONIC FARMING.

CONSIDERABLE interest has been excited in musical circles by the recent experiments of Mr. GRANT, of Wisconsin. Not only has he proved to his own satisfaction that cows to which music is played increase their yield of milk by one-third, but, according to *The Whitby Gazette* of the 24th inst., he has convinced a number of agricultural experts in the United States. But it must be good music.

"At milking-time, according to Mr. Grant, the best music to play is a low soft tune, which will soothe the troubled nerves of the cows; but it has also been discovered that young cows prefer a light composition. All cows like to hear a waltz. They revel in the waltz, but their milk turns sour if they are treated to a vulgar music-hall air. The Wedding March from 'Lohengrin' has been found to have a good effect on most animals.

Professor BANTOCK himself. Sir EDWARD ELGAR's contribution will take the form of a Harvest Festival Masque, in which prominence will be assigned to the different cereals, vegetables and fruits. Thus there will be an *obligato* for the oat pipe in one section; in another there will be a quartet for four vegetable marrowphones, an instrument recently invented by Mr. EUSTACE MILES. A Hop dance and a Tutti Frutti will also be included in the work, which, we understand, is scored for full orchestra, supplemented with a cottage piano, thrashing machine, and the instruments already named.

While harmoniums are found to be admirably adapted to the musical organisation of cows, the physical well-being of pigs is materially advanced by instruments of a shriller timbre, and the Committee have decided to offer a prize for the best duet for two piccolos suitable for farmyard performance. Meantime Mr. CECIL SHARP has generously offered to arrange "Ye Banks and Braes" for small orchestra, as being specially suitable for an



AFTER THE HOLIDAYS.

Mistress. "BUT YOUR EYE DOES NOT LOOK BAD ENOUGH TO KEEP YOU FIVE DAYS OVER YOUR PROPER HOLIDAYS."

Maid. "BUT IT IS, MUM. W'EN I STARES AT ANYBODY 'ARD FOR LONG IT TWITCHES SOMETHING 'ORRIBLE."

audience of donkeys, whose claim to sympathetic treatment has been hitherto sadly overlooked.

The influence of music on poultry has not escaped the notice of the promoters of the new movement, and it is their intention to organize travelling string quartets for the purpose of increasing the yield of eggs by serenading laying hens twice or three times a day. Experiments have shown that hens of a good strain are extraordinarily susceptible to classical chamber music. Buff Orpingtons have a marked partiality for BEETHOVEN, Brahmas naturally prefer BRAHMS, while speckled Anconas are enthusiasts for HAYDN. Where the services of quartet-players are not available, it is found that almost equally satisfactory results are obtained by attaching gramophones to incubators. In the case of table-poultry, again, the system of artificial fattening can be greatly facilitated by musical means. Indeed, at Aylesbury, the forcible feeding of ducks is no longer necessary, so eagerly do they eat to the accompaniment of a pianola or even a musical-box.

"WM."

ACCORDING to me there were no such things as wimberries; according to Mabel, there were such things as wimberries. Peter had to wait while the point was settled. Peter loves his lunch, but does not like it too drawn out. He complained.

"Fill in your spare time," said I, "by giving the casting vote. You are not likely to get fed until the matter has been decided one way or the other."

Peter prides himself upon his tact.

"I see some little purple berries in a dish and I want to eat some of them, please," said he.

"They are bilberries," said I.

"They are wimberries," said Mabel.

"Pass them, please," said Peter.

Owing to his unlucky position at the table, he could not get at the dish without the assistance of both of us.

"Pass what?" I asked, being the nearer to the dish.

"The bilberries, please," said Peter; and I did my share of the passing.

But Mabel was not going to do hers

on those terms. "There are no bilberries," she said firmly, keeping Peter off.

"Pass the wimberries, please, Mabel dear," said Peter; but I placed a hand on the dish. "I am sorry," I said, "but a principle is at stake."

"They grow on the Stretton Hills," said Mabel, "and all Shropshire will tell you that they are wimberries."

"They grow all over the world," I replied, "and every time they do it they are bilberries."

Peter cordially agreed with us both. Then with a sudden lightness of speech, as if he were beginning a subject which had just occurred to him, he said:

"Might I trouble you for the berries?"

"What berries?" said we.

"Those berries," said Peter, pointing. I gave him a lead: "The bil . . . ?"

Mabel suggested: "The wim . . . ?"

"Pass the williamberries, if you please," said Peter, and we not only passed them at once, but I even went out of my way to get him the cream off the side-table, just to show my appreciation of his diplomacy.

THE LAST HOURS.

(Being an account by our Special Correspondent of the death of Home Rule.)

TO-DAY Ulster has found herself. By the right of yesterday's proceedings Ulster is a nation. Yesterday, amid scenes of unparalleled enthusiasm, Ulster was addressed in one afternoon by Lord LONDONDERRY, Sir EDWARD CARSON, Lord CHARLES BERESFORD, Lord WILLOUGHBY DE BROKE and (crowning touch) Mr. F. E. SMITH. Home Rule is dead!

The scene before the arrival of the speakers was one to impress anybody but an obsessed Nationalist. The thousands of upturned faces—a trifle grim at the thought of going into action two years hence, but utterly without signs of fear—spoke a stern resolve unprecedented in history. "Never in any circumstances will we have Home Rule." Ulster has said it, and for all practical purposes Home Rule is dead.

But hark! The National Anthem is playing; and with one accord we rise—those of us who have seats—and stand with bared heads as Sir EDWARD CARSON, followed by Lord LONDONDERRY, Lord CHARLES BERESFORD, Lord WILLOUGHBY DE BROKE and (crowning touch) Mr. F. E. SMITH, stride on to the platform. A moment later and Ulster's leader is speaking.

As I watch his audience I begin to realise the spirit which dominates these men, I begin to understand why it is that four-fifths of Ireland can never have Home Rule if the other fifth objects. They hang upon the very lips of their great general; they follow his every word; with an incredible quickness they take up each point as he makes it. "We are accused of bragging," he says; "I ask you, gentlemen, is it the habit of the Ulster Scot to brag?" and immediately all the Ulster Scots present cry "No!" with a loud voice, and thus stamp out the base libel for ever. A little later Sir Edward refers to a Belfast merchant who has been low enough to give an interview to a Radical paper, and the deep-throated roar of "Kick him!" which resounds through the hall is an indication of the determined spirit which animates the meeting.

But now he strikes a loftier note.

"Gentlemen, we are met to make a solemn covenant one with the other and likewise each to each. We are to take an oath together, mutually and one with the other. In this matter, gentlemen, it has fallen to me by Heaven's will to be your leader, conjointly, mutually, and side by side. Gentlemen, will you follow me?"

Had the answer been "No!" Home Rule might still be a living issue, but the roar of assent made it plain that for all practical purposes Home Rule is dead.

The final note was of a tremendous solemnity:—

"Gentlemen, with God's aid, always providing that *The Westminster Gazette* won't mis-quote me, I will lead you to victory."

Lord WILLOUGHBY DE BROKE is an Irishman of a different type. His message was simple.

"We are prepared," he said, "if it be possible, to resist Home Rule without the shedding of blood; but if blood must flow, then, believe me, gentlemen, blood will flow. For in the last resort our strength will be the strength of our own right arm, and the Thames will run red with blood before a Parliament is established on College Green."

Wild cheering and loud hurrahs greeted this statement, for every one present remembered the noble lord's similar threat in regard to the Parliament Bill; and how, before that Bill became an Act, Lord WILLOUGHBY DE BROKE defied his enemies on Waterloo Bridge until his blood poured into the Thames and, wounded in a hundred places, he fell unconscious across his broken sword.

But suddenly this mass of shouting men is hushed into silence, for Lord CHARLES BERESFORD is in the middle of a typically breezy speech.

"Stick to it, gentlemen," he said. "You're bound to win. You've got them on the run. It's WINSTON CHURCHILL who has been doing it all. I thought when he went to the Admiralty that the Navy might be brought up to its proper strength, but I was wrong. WINSTON . . . two-power standard . . . monkey-tricks . . . the recent naval manoeuvres . . . the Admiralty . . . WINSTON . . ."—at which point a volley of cheering brought an excellent speech to a close. And when the noble lord sat down one felt that once more Home Rule had, for all practical purposes, been killed.

It was at 4.15 that the greatest Irishman of them all, Mr. F. E. SMITH, rose to address the multitude. A Solemn Covenant without Mr. F. E. SMITH would be unthinkable. Indeed anything without Mr. F. E. SMITH would be unthinkable. As a well-known member of our Orange Lodge said to me: "It only needed this!"

"Gentlemen," said Mr. F. E. SMITH, "the Government has betrayed the country, has sold its honour and its sovereign's honour for a mess of pottage; and, gentlemen, it is a mess, too. They want us to get them out of

this mess, but we go to them and we say to them, 'No! get out of it for yourselves.' Gentlemen, they have toed the line to REDMOND, and now the country is going to toe them out."

As I watched the audience under the influence of this speech, I realized what I had not properly realized before, that beneath his stern demeanour the Ulsterman hides a real sense of humour. Indeed it is not too much to say that these splendid Nonconformists—in no way to be confounded, of course, with the Nonconformists of Scotland and Wales and the Whitefield Tabernacle—are the very salt of the earth.

But we must return to Mr. F. E. SMITH. Great Statesman and Leader as he is, I think he made a mistake in his peroration. His words were:

"And if the PRIME MINISTER sends English soldiers to shoot down Ulstermen, what shall we do? Gentlemen, I will tell you what we shall do. We shall simply hang the Prime Minister to the nearest lamp-post."

Of course the difference between English soldiers shooting down common English rioters during a strike, and English soldiers shooting down loyal Ulster rioters during a rebellion is enormous to any real thinker, but to a mixed audience it is a trifle subtle. And some of us could not help remembering that in the former case Mr. F. E. SMITH did *not* hang the PRIME MINISTER to the nearest lamp-post. However, it is ungracious to find fault with one who had come all the way from Liverpool to address his fellow-countrymen, and who by his words had killed Home Rule for ever.

Once more we stood up with bared heads while Lord LONDONDERRY, Sir EDWARD CARSON, Lord CHARLES BERESFORD, Lord WILLOUGHBY DE BROKE and (crowning touch) Mr. F. E. SMITH filed slowly out of the hall. Home Rule was dead.

Later.—Home Rule is dead. Sir EDWARD CARSON has just received the following letter from the PRIME MINISTER:—

DEAR SIR EDWARD,—I gather from the reports of your meetings that Ulster strongly objects to Home Rule. My dear fellow, why didn't you tell me before? I had no idea. I thought Ulster was in *favour* of it. But of course we won't press the Bill if there is anybody who doesn't like it.

Yours ever, H. H. ASQUITH.

P.S.—You might ask F. E. SMITH for me—I understand that he is a Welshman—whether there is anybody in Wales who doesn't want Disestablishment. If there is, we'll drop that too. A. A. M.



Chronic Bankrupt (to his solicitor). "‘HALF-A-CROWN IN THE POUND,’ YOU SAY. WELL, I’VE ALWAYS PAID FIVE BOB BEFORE, AND DAMME I’LL DO IT AGAIN, EVEN IF I HAVE TO PAY IT OUT OF MY OWN POCKET."

THE ONLY TOPIC.

(Being specimen letters from the Correspondence Columns of all the Papers.)

SIR,—I observe in your issue of September 24 the phrase "the undoubted gifts of Smax Hardtrein." What your contributor means by this I should greatly like to know. "Undoubted" is a strong word. It means, I take it, that in universal acceptance Hardtrein has ability. Let me then say here, as unambiguously as I am able, that you are wrong, for one person at least doubts Hardtrein's artistic capacity, and that is myself. If you want to know, there is one man and one only who has undoubted gifts as a producer of plays, and that is Edmund Cradon Gorg.

Yours, etc.,
THORD KNUFFSEN.

SIR,—There is a bet on at our Amateur Dramatic Society as to which came first, Hardtrein or Gorg, and I write to ask you to settle it. Your word will be taken as final. Some of our members hold that Gorg influences Hardtrein, and indeed go farther and apply to Hardtrein a very steep epithet;

others say that Hardtrein influences Gorg. Personally I don't much mind, especially as neither seems to have anything to do with any of the plays that one likes; but since there is money on it—as a matter of fact, five shillings—I should greatly like to know.

Yours, etc., IRVING TONKS.

SIR,—I see references in the Press to the genius of Mr. Cradon Gorg. They are ridiculous. There is but one man of genius now connected with the artistic production of plays, and that is Bolskoff, of the Nijni Novgorod Haymarket. Both Gorg and Hardtrein equally derive from Bolskoff.

Yours, etc., HENRY K. BURGE.

SIR,—Would it not be possible for some arrangement to be made among the nations by which each kept its own men of transcendent genius within its confines? England, I have no doubt, might lose a certain number of musicians, but, at any rate, we should retain that superb genius Cradon Gorg in our midst, to show us, as he has shown the Poles, the Lapps, the Finns and the Albinos how a play really

ought to be mounted. At the same time we should be freed from the unpalatable attentions of Herr Hardtrein and other undesirable but pushful aliens.

Yours, etc., J. B.

"After this try the whistle for no side lent, the Old Paulines this try was converted by Bewsher for no side, the whistle went for no side."—*Sportsman*.

This harping on the absence of side compels us to say that one can be too modest.

"‘Rab’ broke into a laugh—one of those hearty boyish laughs with which he greeted Aunt Susie's asperitis."—*Daily News*.

Speaking as one who, after years of suffering, has just had his asperix removed, we condemn Rab's unfeeling behaviour.

From *Syndicalism* in "The People's Books" series:—

"Man had his clothes stripped off, and was exposed, naked as when he was born, to the intrusive and penetrating gaze of his brother-man. He had to make fresh combinations . . ."

Quite right too.



Fond Mother (who has allowed a whole week of the new term to elapse before running down to see her boy). "AND HOW HAS MY DARLING BEEN GETTING ON?"
Master. "VERY WELL, VERY WELL. SUFFERING A LITTLE FROM NOSTALGIA, PERHAPS."
Fond Mother. "NOSTALGIA! AND THE DENTIST ASSURED ME HE WOULDN'T HAVE ANY MORE TROUBLE WITH IT!"

BY PROXY.

GOOD MORNING! Feel my pulse. It doesn't flutter?

No: well, I want a nice engagement ring.
 Not for myself, you see; it is an utter
 Ass of a pal of mine who's done this thing.
O saepe mecum! Rattle, bat, and putter
 We've wielded hand in hand. But this, I take it,
 Doesn't intrigue you? No? Well, let's get on.
 I want a ring as cheap as you can make it.
 Show me your meagre diamonds white and wan,
 Yet such as sparkle ever and anon.

Have you a half hoop, say, at thirty shillings?

I thought not. . . . Yes, one ought to spring a bit
 On such occasions; wherefore else these killings
 Of sacrificial kids with throats well slit?
 What are these cooings worth? What be these billings?
 The odds are one will get but one engagement.
 Were I the man, good sooth, I would not fence;
 I'd let your zeal run on to its assuagement,
 Bidding you bring me out your most immense
 Of jewel-riddled rings and d—— the expense.

But there it is. Thomas's last direction

Was, "Do not go beyond a certain sum."
 He would not come and make his own selection,
 Partly for that strange quaking of the tum,
 That bashfulness before your bland inspection,
 Which is the usual thing on these occasions,—
 Partly, alas! because he feared that you,
 Knowing the strangle hold for all evasions,
 Would shame him (rightly shame him, it is true),
 And rush him more than he had meant you to.

Now there's a ring he'd fancy: kindly trot it
 Out for a minute. How much would it be?—

What!—I can't run to that! I haven't got it!

Gods! it would break me! That won't do for me! . . .

Him, I should say. . . . Oh well, I thought you'd spot it—

Yes, I'm the man myself. You would be boobies

To let a dodge like that deceive you, eh?

Bring out your bulky gems, your whacking rubies,

Your Koh-i-noors, your Cullinans!—To-day

I got engaged, and I must pay, pay, pay.

"During an expedition to Kirkoswald, I found a small camp of seven by the riverside. The one complaint was that the Kirkoswald hens laid badly! The night before they scoured the village and could only get three for their tea, and there were seven of them. 'What did you do?' I somewhat heedlessly asked. 'Toss up?' 'Oh, no,' said the patrol leader, 'scouts always share alike; we boiled them hard and chopped them up on bread and butter.'"—*Church Times.*
 This is a new recipe for boiled fowl, and one which we shall try next time we are reduced to a paltry three-sevenths of a hen for tea.

"A cow died of East Coast fever at Makalaka's Location on Thursday."—*Grahamstown Journal.*

This is headed "Social and Personal," and we therefore give it the publicity of this further intimation.

Two Biographies.

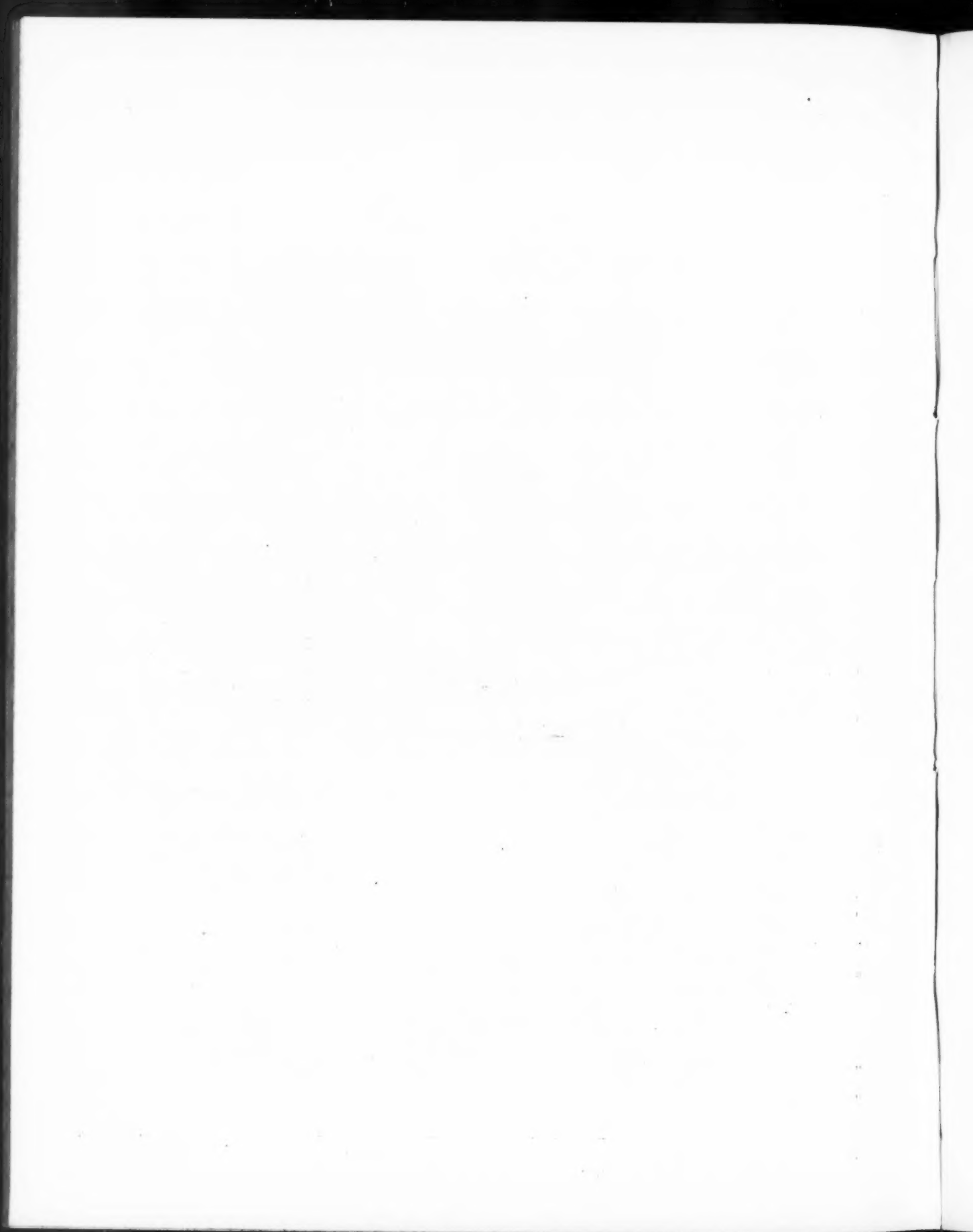
["Since the publication of Morley's 'Life of Gladstone,' no biography has created such a sensation as the Caxton 'Life of David Lloyd George,' by Herbert du Parcq, M.A., B.C.L."—*Advt.*]

MORLEY three volumes found enough to shed
 Illumination upon GLADSTONE dead.

Du PARCQ needs four to satiate your gorge,
 Ye fond admirers of the living GEORGE.



THE BOILING POINT.



DESTRUCTION DAY.

WE always know that other people would like to do the same if they had the pluck. For the Jumble Sale is at best only a method for burking responsibility and raising money for charitable purposes by questionable means. The only real cure is the Clean Sweep.

And then of course no one can be bothered. You may start all right with the drawing-room. But when you find that it takes a sizeable wheelbarrow to do that one room, you generally chuck it, and go away and smoke a pipe and try to think of something else.

But Ethel and I have really faced this problem. We have done more than that. We have elevated the day into a Family Festival, an Annual Carnival. It is a day set apart for Destruction on a grand scale, by fire, by water and by burial. We are stern, inexorable; we have no thought of vain regrets: indeed we egg each other on. The first Destruction day—three years ago—lasted for nearly a week. It rivalled the Spring Cleaning, and was much more permanent in its results. We purged the house from the far end of the back cellar to the top corner of the garret. All its inmates, of whatsoever age or degree, trooped forth into the open bearing their burdens to heap upon the pile. Out came the defective cameras, the unread books, unworn clothes, torn music and broken chairs. Out came the damaged mowing-machine. Out came the barbarous agglomeration of photographs that stood on the piano. Out came all that hopeless and decrepit mass of goods that had been "put by because they would be useful some time." One full cart-load was culled from the little hole under the stairs alone. But we were not quite up to the job in those days. We granted reprieves; we commuted sentences. The clock (which did not go), having once belonged to our Aunt Martha, was spared; also a torn umbrella, which might some day be recovered, and a hideous pair of vases, because they had been a recent present from my mother-in-law. But we are much firmer now.

Now that we have only one year's supply to work on we generally get through in a day, if we have an early breakfast and a cold lunch. But, of course, the bonfire has to be laid and the grave dug overnight. The morning is devoted to collection and preparation and the afternoon to sacrifice, and finally such as will not burn and are too large to bury—the boiler that cracked comes under this heading—



"WHERE 'S YON DOG COOM FROM?"

"YON? WHY, 'E 'S OUR MARY EM'LY'S 'USBAND'S FATHER'S BROTHER'S WIFE'S FATHER'S POOP."

"OH, AYE! A THOWT 'E WEREN'T QUITE A STRANGER."

are sunk from a punt in the lake, amid rousing scenes of enthusiasm. It is always a strenuous day, and we are even now in doubt if it would not be quicker to take everything out of the house to start with and then put back the ones we want to keep. For it is amazing the amount of stuff that drifts into a house in the course of a year.

And in the evening we come home, worn and weary, and make a tour of the establishment and sit down in each room and look round and say to each other, "There is not a single thing in this room that has not a good reason for being here." And we feel rewarded. For we know that no one in the world except ourselves can say that.

I daresay we are a little carried away by our enthusiasm. It takes a day or

two to settle down. For the innocent sometimes suffer with the guilty.

"What are you looking for?" Ethel will ask, as I wander about the library.

"I can't make out what has become of the paper-knife," I will reply. And then Ethel will smile, as though enjoying some secret reminiscence. "I shall get you another the first day I am in town," she will assure me sweetly. It is understood that I ask no questions.

Extracts from *School Hygiene* :—

"Young children should be properly clothed in winter."—p. 43.

"A good desk is undeniably better than a bad desk."—p. 131.

Having mastered the subtleties of the profession, an aspirant can now sail in and become a schoolmaster.

A TOTAL FAILURE.

"You aren't bringing Felicity up properly," they had said more than once. "The child is getting precocious. She knows far too much of some things, and not enough of others. No wonder with such a father."

I began to think there might be something in the idea, and anyway I could not rest under the imputation of being an unsuccessful parent, so I purchased a small book on the subject, entitled, "Training the Young Mind." From this work I gleaned the information that education may be imparted at all times and places. "It is better," the author said, "to let the child learn from nature than from books. Take him to the Zoological Gardens."

I laid the book on my desk and sent for my little daughter.

I spread my feet out on the hearth-rug and put my hands under my coat tails.

"This afternoon," I said, "I am going to take you to the Zoological Gardens."

"You mean the Zoo?"

"I mean precisely what I said, Felicity."

"All right, Papa, have it your own way."

I twisted my moustache.

"A child must learn to respect its father," I said. "It's the first rule in the book . . . that is . . ."

I cleared my throat and possibly cast a nervous glance in the direction of my desk, for Felicity's eyes travelled there and back with lightning speed.

"I'll go and dress at once, Papa," she said; "what would you like me to wear?"

"I'm afraid that you think too much of your appearance, Felicity," I said severely. "Vanity is one of our little faults. The animals we shall see this afternoon will not be critical. They do not dress at all."

"No; not at all well, anyway."

"Not at all," I said.

As we drove there I took the opportunity of saying a few words to Felicity on the subject of our little excursion.

"We must always try on such occasions as these," I said, "to improve our minds even while we are enjoying ourselves. From the animals we shall see to-day we may very likely learn some useful lessons, even though they cannot talk or think."

"Or smoke or play football," added Felicity.

I feared for the moment that she was not taking our little talk quite seriously, but on glancing down I discovered that her face was perfectly grave.

We wandered about the gardens, and I showed the various exhibits to my little daughter, telling her their names, which were fortunately on the cages, and explaining to her their various habits and peculiarities. She was very attentive, but almost entirely silent.

She approved of the pelicans and the polar bears, but shook her head sadly at the camel, though she ad-

"Now I think we have learnt something here, have we not? Let us go on and see if Mr. Elephant is at home."

Felicity bought a bun for the elephant (which introduced the subject of extravagance) and gave it to a seal (which brought up the question of wastefulness).

"But he looks so hungry," she said.

"My dear child," I said, "seals never eat buns. They eat fish. They live on a strict fish diet."

Of course the seal spoilt everything. It swallowed the bun, laughed aloud, and disappeared into the lake. It might have had a little more sense.

Felicity said nothing.

We went on and entered the Elephant House.

"There, that's the elephant," I said, "No, not there! There."

Felicity gazed at it with round eyes.

"Oo."

"Now, the elephant," I pursued, "though the largest creature in the world, has not the sagacity of the dog nor the fleetness of the gazelle nor the industry of the bee."

"Nor can he carol like the lark," said Felicity.

"True."

"Well, you can't expect the poor beast to do everything."

I had to admit the soundness of this view. On the whole the arguments seemed strongly against me. I began to wish I had brought the book.

Our last visit was to the "Large Ape House."

"Here," I said, "we stand in the presence of



The Duke Warmund. "I SAY, OLD MAN, WHAT MADE YOU EXECUTE YOUR UNCLE?"

King Sigisbert. "WELL, OLD DEAR, THE ONLY WAY TO AVOID MY MOTHER-IN-LAW'S VISIT WAS FOR THE COURT TO GO INTO MOURNING."

mitted that he might be useful as a water cistern.

It was not until we reached the lion's house that she volunteered an opinion.

"It would be fun to let them all out, wouldn't it?" she said.

"Oh no," I replied, "it would be a great mistake. These lions and tigers, though they look so much like pussy on a large scale, are very fierce and wild, and would perhaps eat several people."

"Why not?" she said; "I shouldn't blame them."

"You would be the first to blame them," I said, "if they ate you. We are all very prone to think that other people's misfortunes are of little importance, but when it is a matter of inconvenience to ourselves it is a very different story."

our ancestors."

Felicity gazed at them for a long time in solemn silence. Then she turned to me with a look of deep reproach.

"Oh, Papa," she said, "how you have deceived me!"

"How—how have I deceived you, my dear?" I said.

"You know you always told me, Papa, that our ancestors came over with the Conqueror."

We passed out through the turnstile, and I hailed a taxi.

"Perhaps I ought to tell you," said Felicity, "that I've seen all these animals before."

"Then why didn't you say so?"

"I thought perhaps it might spoil it for you," said Felicity.



A LESSON FROM THE RECENT MANŒUVRES.

THE NEW MILITARY HEADGEAR TO BAFFLE AEROPLANE SCOUTS.

TO THE LAST WASP OF SUMMER.

COOL as a cucumber! swift as an Arab! and
Deuce of a dog of a wasp in your day!
Now, as you shuffle a slovenly saraband
Out of my tea-cup and on to the tray,
Slowly you foot it and sadly you moralise,
Blind to our laughter and deaf to our sneers,
Gazing about with a couple of coral eyes
Jewelled with tears!

Once so satanic, red-eyed as a ruby, an
Elegant, opulent, arrogant, bold,
Blood-thirsty brigand, as black as a Nubian,
Winged with chalcedony, girdled with gold,
Now you no longer down terrified tea-tables
Bluster about in the colours of Clare;
Down in the dumps! Is it choice of the eatables?
That—or the air?

Are you already becoming rheumatic, a
Prey to the chills of the wintery breeze?
Have you lumbago and gout and sciatica,
Crick in the back and a knock in the knees?
Is it the thought of a summer's austerity
Makes you unmindful of peril so soon,
That you drop helplessly into my very tea—
Spooned by a spoon!

So, for this hero of wings, sting and stamina,
Fished from the tea-cup and decently spread
Out on a plate, wound with cerements of jam in a
Sepulchre quarried from standardised bread,

Must I elaborate songs that shall sanctify
Such a bad brute with so poisoned a sting?
No, I will be most emphatically blanked if I
Do such a thing!

Still, a brief note in the agony column might
Break to your friends the sad news they should
know;

That—and a slab of memorial dolomite,
Graved with the date I delivered the blow!
Yes—with a spoon I contrived to distort you. Is
This, then, a time to put crape round my hat?
No, I'll go crapeless, and growling—"De mortuis . . ."
Leave it at that!

More Rare and Refreshing Fruit.

"Rumours are again current of the resignation of the Premiership by Mr. Asquith who would be created a peer."—*Buenos Aires Herald*.
Rise, Sir William!

The Hard Winter of the West Indies.

"November to May in Barbados is like June to September in England."—*Advt. in "Morning Post."*
Thanks, but not again.

"Scap is said to have been invented by the ancient Britons, blue and pink being their favourites, and flowers of these tints receive many more visits from them than do others."

Dublin Evening Mail.

So great a scandal have they become in our garden that we have promised the Vicar's wife to paint the delphiniums yellow.

AT THE PLAY.

"THE WINTER'S TALE."

I AM again beholden to *The Pall Mall Gazette's* interviewer for light on the motives of an actor-producer. This time it is Mr. GRANVILLE BARKER who has his secrets torn from his reluctant



ONE OF THE OLD GUARD.

(Not an advertisement of the Smoke Abatement Society.)

breast:—"To a question concerning the advantages of a simple setting for Shakspeare over a more elaborate production, Mr. BARKER replied very pointedly in four words: 'You get the play.' 'Either,' he added, 'you want to see a play of Shakspeare, or you do not.'" [I generally don't.] "'There are a vast number of persons who do, and the 'decoration' we have used is perfectly obvious, simple and straightforward. Granted that you want to give the play, and not merely use the play as a sort of accessory to a pageant, there is no other way of doing it.'"

I gathered from the above that my friend Mr. GRANVILLE BARKER had determined that SHAKSPEARE should at last have a chance, while the producer, in a spasm of sacrificial devotion, suppressed himself. I could guess, therefore, what a shock it must have been to him to find his own work discussed in the Press; to be subjected to an interview from which his nature recoiled; to read elsewhere a discourse on the subject by Mr. GORDON CRAIG, in which the

name of SHAKSPEARE was never once mentioned, but he (Mr. BARKER), however much his production might irritate Mr. CRAIG (who hadn't seen it), was admitted to be "a fine fellow." And I can well imagine the hot and rapid words of protest that fell from Mr. GRANVILLE BARKER's lips when, on entering the vestibule of the Savoy Theatre, he found, not a statue of the Bard to whom he was giving a chance, but a life-size portrait of himself.

In his delightful preface to the acting edition of *The Winter's Tale* Mr. BARKER says: "As to scenery, as scenery is mostly understood—canvas, realistically painted—I would have none of it." But to avoid realistic scenery and present a formal background is not to deliver yourself from the vice of pageantry if at the same time you fill your stage, as Mr. BARKER does, with a veritable orgy of fantastic costumes, dazzling with the blaze of their discordant colours and disturbing by the restlessness of their designs. The scene of the rustic revels was pure pageant and nothing else, notwithstanding its unobtrusive cottage at the back. The effect of this kind of thing is still to strain the senses of the audience to the point of exhaustion, leaving them scant strength or leisure for the digestion of the play itself. At His Majesty's they may dress the Greek tyrant and his Court on strictly classic lines, and at the Savoy they may see them through the eyes of the Renaissance, but that does not make Mr. BARKER's art any better than Sir HERBERT TREE's as far as SHAKSPEARE's chance is concerned.



VIE DE BOHÈME.

Perdita	Miss NESBITT.
Florizel	Mr. NEILSON-TERRY.

"Classic dress" (I quote again from the producer's preface) "would offend against the very spirit of the play," and he therefore preferred to agree with Mr. ALBERT ROTHENSTEIN that "Renaissance-classic, that is, classic dress as Shakspeare saw it, would be the thing." But does he suppose that the bizarre costumes with which he staggers the Bohemian countryside are also as



A MOUTHPIECE OF THE ORACLE.

Officer of the Court Mr. KELT.

SHAKSPEARE "saw" them, with Warwickshire in his eye? Who is to say what SHAKSPEARE actually "saw" with that vision of his that from the Pisgah-height of genius could descry the sea-board of Bohemia, and Delphi isled in the ocean? Does anyone imagine that it would have greatly disturbed his sense of historic periods and local colour if he had been asked to shift his *Hamlet* to Forres and his *Macbeth* to Elsinore?

When I produce a play of SHAKSPEARE I shall give him a real chance by putting his characters, of whatever period, into the everyday modern dress of actors at preliminary rehearsals; and when I am interviewed I shall say that that is how SHAKSPEARE "saw" them, or, at any rate, how I see him seeing them; for if *Leontes*, of the age of the Sicilian tyrants and the glory of the Delphic oracle, can look forward some eighteen or nineteen centuries to the period of GIULIO ROMANO, Renaissance artist, surely his creator could project himself over a paltry three centuries into mine.

Mr. HENRY AINLEY, whom I don't remember to have seen before in a facial disguise, gave a really remarkable performance as *Leontes*. It was the only thing that moved me at all. He had evidently received the *mot d'ordre* to

defy the speed limit with his glorious voice; but I did not resent the pace at which he took his words, leaving my intelligence far in the rear; for one can always read SHAKESPEARE afterwards to find out what the actor has been saying. I could see that he had gone gibbering mad, and that was enough for me.

Miss LILLAH MCCARTHY, who was privileged to make her own pace, gave its right dignity to *Hermione's* moving defence before the Court, and to the noble passage,

"Good my lords,
I am not prone to weeping."

But the rest, of whose utterances in the original text scarcely a word was spared us, left me rather cold; though very sound work was done by Mr. DREWITT as *Camillo*, Miss BERINGER (who seemed to enjoy herself) as *Paulina*, Mr. NICHOLSON as the *Old Shepherd*, Mr. QUARTERMAINE as the *Clown* and Mr. GRAHAM as *Polixenes*. But I found Miss NESBITT's *Perdita* too skittishly virginal, and I was frankly gratified when *The Bear* made mincemeat of Mr. RATHBONE's *Antigonus*. The humour of Mr. WHITBY as *Autolycus* and Mr. PLAYFAIR as *Paulina's Steward* was a very pleasant relief, but the best fun was undesigned, except by the costumer and the person responsible for the gentlemen's plumes. I never want to see a more diverting spectacle than Mr. KELT as the tufted *Officer of the Court* (Admiralty and Divorce), and his raucous recitation of Apollo's oracle was a thing to travel miles to hear.

The noise, even without an orchestra, was often appalling, and, if the meaning of many of the words was anyhow going to be taken for granted in the rush of their delivery, it would have been kinder of Mr. BARKER to take some larger place, like Covent Garden or Olympia, for his production.

In conclusion, if my remarks have been lacking in that fulsomeness which keeps a critic out of trouble, I honestly want to be grateful to Mr. BARKER for a very sporting piece of work. I only wish that he had chosen for his experiment a play less exposed to the ridicule of the Philistine. For, when full recognition is made of its great literary qualities, *The Winter's Tale* is, after all, a preposterous drama, isn't it? O. S.

"In his humorous musical entertainment Mr. — has had the honour of appearing before H.M. King George IV."

Torquay Directory.

Some of the humorous musical entertainments we have heard must have had the honour of appearing before QUEEN ANNE.

FANCY AND FACT.

(The first morning's cub-hunting.)



AS FANCY PAINTED IT AT 12 P.M.



AS IT WAS AT 4.30 A.M.

CLEAVAGE.

HERE, amid the rough upheaval,
Stones and *débris* strewn around,
Mixed with tree-roots and primeval
Hunks of pasturage, are found
Geologically jumbled in a ragged warp
of ground.

Peradventure you have wondered
What assault, what Titan thrust,
Brought about this rudely Sundered
Wilderness of weed and dust,
This unlovely-looking fracture of the
elemental crust.

Yes, you may have learnt from
tag s

That this kind of thing occurred
In the avalanching ages;

Or, perhaps, you may have heard
How some seismic sort of tremor caused
the strata to be stirred.

Yet, although these tufts and granites
To the scientist may seem
Simply items in our planet's
Evolutionary scheme,
I am not of that opinion; on the
contrary I dream
Of the neolithic heyday
Till the fancy strikes me hot,
That 'twas here, one hapless playday,
On this lacerated plot,
That some brawny-wristed Briton first
essay'd a niblick shot.

The new craze at Pekin: Reading
the underwriting on the Great Wall.

MEDALITIS.

IN the full height and glory of the year,
When husbandmen are housing
golden sheaves,
Before the jealous frost has come to shear
From the bright woodland its reluctant leaves,
I pass within a gateway, where the trees,
Tall, stately, multi-coloured, manifold,
Draw the eye on as to some Chersonese,
Spanning the pathway with their arch of gold.

A river sings and loiters through the grass,
Girdling a pleasance scythed and trimly shorn;
And here I watch men vanish and repass
To the last hour of eve from early morn;
Dryads peer out at them, and goat-foot Pan
Plays on his pipe to their unheeding ears;
They pass, like pilgrims in a caravan,
Towards some Mecca in the far-off years.

Blind to the woodland's autumn livery,
Blind to the emerald pathway that they tread,
Deaf to the river's low-pitched lullaby,
Their limbs are quick and yet their souls are dead;
Nothing to them the song of any bird,
For them in vain were horns of Elfland wound,
Blind, deaf and stockfish-mute; for, in a word,
They are engaged upon a Medal Round.

Making an anxious torment of a game
Whose humours now intrigue them not at all,
They chase the flying wraith of printed fame,
With card and pencil arithmetical;
With features pinched into a painful frown
Looming misfortunes they anticipate,
Or, as the fatal record is set down,
Brood darkly on a detrimental 8.

These are in thrall to Satan, who devised
Pencil and card to tempt weak men to sin,
Whereby their prowess might be advertised—
Say, 37 Out and 40 In;
Rarely does any victim break his chains
And from his nape the lethal burden doff—
The man with medal virus in his veins
Seldom outlives it and gets back to Golf.

THE REPRIEVE.

GLORIA insisted on it.
"None of my fiancés," she observed sententiously, "has ever been completely without a redeeming feature. You *will* part your hair in the middle; you *will* wear Liberty Art collars; you *will* go about in an overcoat like a dressing-gown and socks like a cyclone—"

"A bicycle," I interjected cleverly. (When Gloria is once fairly off, any interjection is clever.)

She paused not to laugh; then she went on—"And if you can't even wear spats for my sake, all is over between us. I can't go about with a fiancé looking like—(she searched for an adequately abysmal description)—an artist."

"Don't be ridiculous," I said; "I had my hair cut only on Saturday. Anyhow, real men don't wear spats; they avoid them because they know they're effeminate; and women cultivate them because they think they're masculine."

"Why drag real men into it?" asked Gloria.

I looked at her determinedly.

"Young woman," I said, "why did you become engaged to me?"

"Gracious," said Gloria, "didn't you read my letter to *The Daily Mail* about it? What do young men read nowadays? Put your hat on at once," she added, "we're going sparring."

It was no use; I went like a lamb, or like a bird. A lamb in bird's clothing, let us say.

We went steadily along Oxford Street till we came to a policeman.

"Can you direct me to a good spatter, constable?" I asked.

"He means a place where he can buy spats," explained Gloria.

(She is one of those people who came into the world to explain things that don't need it.)

At the door of Hobbes & Marlowe's distinguished-looking emporium I halted for a last stand.

"What are you dreaming about?" said Gloria sharply. "Go inside."

"Inside?" I asked, in pained surprise. I am an open-air sort of man, you see.

"Inside," repeated Gloria coldly; but even as she spoke I detected a shade of abstraction in her tone.

Now at this point I must tell you that the trade description of Hobbes & Marlowe is "Ladies and Gents' Haberdashers;" and even as I dallied at the introit, Gloria's eyes were glazing with enslavement; and, as we moved inwards, she remarked, so casually that I knew she must be deeply stirred—

"I'll come in with you and just glance at some things while you're buying."

So I asked the way to spats, and Gloria to handkerchiefs. And we parted.

It was then that Hope first sat up definitely and said, "Here I am."

"The lady is buying some things," I explained to the man, "and I thought I'd just glance at some spats."

I glanced; I was grieved and amazed to discover how far the modern spat falls short of my modest requirements.

"Have you no spats with clocks?" I asked at last. "I want some with pale mauve clocks—you know—the colour of the tiles in Dover Street Station."

No, he had no such spats, he said sadly.

Seeing instinctively that he was going to offer to make them for me for Christmas, I added hastily—

"I want spats with laces, too. Nothing *outré*—just ordinary porpoise leather. You *don't* mean to say you're out of laced spats?"

It sounds incredible, I know, but he was.

Just as I was about to explain that I could only wear spats of Sumatra rubber and taffetas, Gloria reappeared, very full of herself, to find me bastioned with rejected spats.

"Oh, Jack," she said, "I've got just the adorablest pair of smoke-grey evening gloves for four-and-six. Fancy! And two of the most priceless swank hankies you ever saw. Haven't you got your old spats *yet*? Oh, come along—they'll do any time; only pay these people, will you?"

And so my spats were averted; and in case Gloria ever introduces the topic again I am keeping my spat bill for her:—

Dr. to HOBBS & MARLOWE, LTD.,
Ladies and Gents' Haberdashers.

	s.	d.
1 pr. Gloves	4	6
2 Bt. Sk. Hkcs.	4	9½
	9	3½

WITH THANKS.

But I often think with a shudder of what might have occurred if H. & M. haberdashed for gents only.

Sir HERBERT TREE as printed in *The Daily Graphic*:—

"It has been my constant regret during the last few years that I have been unable to leave my theatre, for the public has steadily declined to support it without the presence of the *manger* in the cast."

What keeps us away is the loose-box-office in the vestibule.

DIRGE

FOR THE PASSING OF THE SILLY SEASON.
 SEASON of serpents and the giant growth
 Of gooseberry, whose knell is nearly rung
(Toll slowly while its doleful hook is slung !),
 Warm up thy cockles, knowing I am loath
 To let thee pass unhonoured and unsung.

Though Pressmen seek thy death, since thou dost bring
 Scant food for the abhorred paste and shears
(Toll slowly in the sad free-lance's ears !),
 I am thy friend, and from mine eyelids spring
 The meed of more or less melodious tears.

For when the Parliamentary portals close
 And nearly all the news is pretty thin
(Toll slowly, for the long lean months begin !),
 Editors drop their supercilious pose
 And I can get my annual look in.

When haughty regulars refuse to write,
 Rollicking on their overplus of pay
(Toll slowly, for its life was short and gay !),
 When specials fail and space no more is "tight,"
 Occasional contributors make hay!

And now that thou must pass, and I as well,
 Dear season of the mediocre stuff!
(Toll slowly for its journalistic bluff !)
 In that lugubrious Limbo where I dwell
 I cannot weep thy exodus enough.

We go—but if thy knell can be delayed,
 Hang on a bit, old thing, until by dint
(Toll slowly : it will have to take the hint !)
 Of thy sweet presence and continued aid
 These verses scramble somewhere into print.

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks.)

MR. WALTER BELL is the Colossus of Fleet Street. He strides over seven centuries of the history of the thoroughfare, and at every step finds matter of human interest. *Fleet Street in Seven Centuries* (Sir ISAAC PITMAN) is considerably more than a record of persons and events grouped under its title. It traces with many picturesque touches the growth of London beyond the walls within which the Romans jealously encircled the City. It is no new topic, having found congenial work for the pen of Stow and earlier writers. It has never been better done than in this portly volume, which no one who begins to read will find too long. Mr. BELL is animated by sympathy for London throughout its many centuried course, and has the happy knack of communicating his interest to his reader. The pages are thronged with passages that within the space of a few lines illuminate Fleet Street even more effectively than the electric light that succeeds to the once familiar lantern. One learns, for example, that the back part of Mr. Punch's former office in Fleet Street occupied the site of a house where MILTON lodged, a circumstance that may account for much. For years the daily newspapers have grown accustomed to speak disrespectfully of the sea-serpent. But there is no getting over the fact that nine years ago, excavations being made at the printing office of a weekly newspaper in Salisbury Square, there were dug out the bones of a reindeer. This animal, yearning for immortality, knew what it was about when it selected this precise place of sepulture.



German Visitor. "VAITOR, I SPEAK DER ENGLISH NOT MOCH. VILL YOU DER NODIS EXPLAIN?"

Waiter. "WELL, SIR, IT'S SORT OF LIKE THIS. SUPPOSIN' I WAS TO SAY TO YOU, 'NOW, COME ON, 'AIR CUT,' WELL, YOU SEE—WELL, THAT'S IT!"

A drawback to the full success of the scheme is that the far-seeing beast necessarily remains anonymous. Mr. BELL, commencing his tour through the centuries, has something to say about the Roman occupation. The wildest desire of the human breast would be satisfied if it were possible for JULIUS CÆSAR to revisit the scene of one of his early labours and, taking a turn in a taxi-cab, say from Hyde Park Corner to London Bridge, behold how far-reaching an oak has grown out of the acorn he planted.

The chief diversion which *The Three Anarchists*, by MAUD STEPNEY RAWSON (PAUL), offered me was to imagine the expression and feelings of the library subscriber settling down to his expected *bonne bouche* of bombs and pistols, and discovering on the title-page, from a quoted *obiter scriptum* of Mr. C. F. G. MASTERMAN, that the anarchists in question were Love and Birth and Death. Here clearly are a title and a theme of promise, but beyond the range of the author, who is content to do no more than tack on her title to her novel without the trouble of artistically developing her theme. Love and Birth and Death enter the orbit of most of us, not in a specially anarchistic way, and not always in that of the gentle and too subservient Janet Boldre, or her bearish, miserly gentleman of a husband, George; or her stepson Harry; or her friend, Walter

Geste. And I can't help noticing the author's use of a growing modern habit of slinging on to paper, in the name of realism, all sorts of unselected detail, cemented together with *clichés* worn smooth with constant service. But I can unreservedly commend to all lovers of unconscious humour the pseudo-realistic fight between old *George* and young *Harry*—the "swift cracks of the fist," the "hits in the chest," the snarls, grunts and gurgles, and (when *George* took to kicking, which *Harry* resented) "the wounding feet waggling feebly" and the "horrible pain below the belt."

For several years I have been vaguely conscious that Mr. BURGIN has been writing novels and that I have not been reading them, but until I opened *Varick's Legacy* (HUTCHINSON) I had no idea that my acts of omission amounted to the appalling number of forty-three. If, however, this book is to be taken as a fair sample of the author's wares it is not difficult to account for their popularity.

Here we have two charming young daughters of a duke masquerading as poor girls and relieving the sick and the needy. Among the recipients of their bounty are three youthful and impecunious aspirants for literary fame who—in a death-bed letter—are bequeathed to the great *Varick* (editor of a new magazine, dramatist, novelist, and so forth) by one *Terson*, who had befriended him when he was "down on his uppers." From the history of this trio I gather that Mr. BURGIN's well of sentimentality is very far from being dry, but that his stock of humour is suffering from temporary exhaustion. At any rate, he has besprinkled *Varick's Legacy* with jokes which even a family-humorist would decline to handle.

Every now and then we get in the papers a story of a kidnapped child and a huge ransom demanded from a millionaire parent. That, stripped of embroidery, is the theme of Miss JENNETTE LEE's book, *Betty Harris* (METHUEN). I think a very good detective story could be made out of it—I dare say it has been done—but that is not Miss LEE's way. She has chosen the alternative sentimental method, and skated over the practical details. The child is tracked after nearly three months, more by coincidences than anything else, to a hiding place which, I am sure, would not have baffled the Chicago police (who are those concerned) more than a day. The little girl is found by a dreamy sort of Greek fruiterer who sees visions of the Acropolis whenever he shuts his eyes, and gives one the impression that Miss LEE has recently been doing Yurup and acquired a fit-out of general culture on the best Boston lines. Her style is spasmodic: four words and . . . two more words and — and so on; and most of the time she seems to be on tip-toe reaching to the top-shelf for the literary word.

Miss M. P. WILLCOCKS has utterly defeated me with *The*

Wind Among the Barley (MILLS AND BOON). There are two things that put me off in the usual run of tales about villages. Though it is good to be alone among the bracken, it is not so pleasant hearing anyone else declaiming about it in lengthy and affected simplicity. Again, the village annalist always seems to be saying, especially if his village is a Devonian one, "This is our village and I am one of us, but you are not, and don't you forget that." To these faults, Miss WILLCOCKS adds a third, that of going beyond her point and ending on an anticlimax, which is telling once in a way but tiresome when repeated at the end of every one of her twenty-odd stories. And yet she leaves me the devoted admirer of her village of *Larkbeare*, her fishermen, farm-folk and moor people, and almost of herself. *Susan Palfrey*, *Mrs. Tamzen Pickman*, *Lawyer Brimacombe* and *Dr. Boswarva*, I loved them all for their odd matter-of-fact ways and their happy phrases. "But her 'll have to shift her clothes before seeing company," says one of *Maria Shaddick*. "Not her," is the answer. "'Tis a homely sort of body, and if you see her Monday, you see her Sunday." Best of all are the incessant love-affairs of that hearty philanderer, *John Metherrall*.

Had Miss WILLCOCKS striven less after simplicity, had she not included herself so prominently and almost ostentatiously among her characters and specifically called me a "stranger" in the first chapter, I should have been bound to confess that I felt nothing but gratitude for this entertaining series of homely episodes.

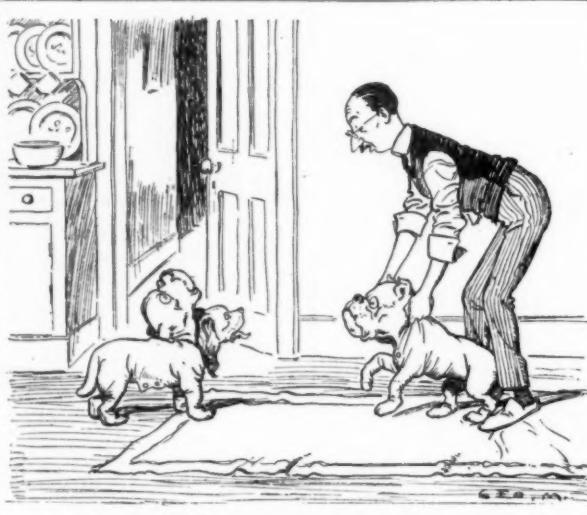
Of the various clever writers who are at present striving for first place in what I may call the East London Stakes, there is no doubt whatever that Mr.

ROBERT HALIFAX carries my money every time. Much as I remember to have liked *A Whistling Woman*, his latest book, *A Slice of Life* (CONSTABLE) is certainly its better. There is the same delicacy and insight, with a greater sureness of touch. I think it must be the milk of human kindness that gives to the productions of Mr. HALIFAX their peculiar flavour. All the persons of the simple tale, the dwellers in Roper's Row, Barking, *Mr. Donno* especially, and "the old soul at the back," are touched in, even the unpleasant ones, with a humanity that has never a hint of caricature. *Mr. Casswade*, the landlord, and his good-hearted, wholly ineffective agent, *Josh*, are creations of pure joy, from whose interviews I should like to quote whole pages. Now and again I am a little uncertain about the heroine, but here I am prepared to admit the fault is more mine than that of her creator; she has some love scenes that are as unconventional, yet completely sincere, as anything I can call to mind. Sincerity is indeed the final note of Mr. HALIFAX. At his most sensational you are never aware of invention; the thing remains a "just so" story—and a fine one.

"£27,000 PLEDGED FOR HOME RULE FUN."

Dublin Evening Mail.

"What is fun to you is death to Ulster."



A TIMID HOUSEHOLDER PREPARING FOR THE BURGLARY SEASON BY DISGUIISING HIS SPANIELS AS BULL-DOGS.